

Building Environmental Health Services Capacity –Island CHD in State and Local Departments of Public Health

Application No.: U38/CCU020426-01

Island County Health Department is, in many ways, a prime example of that written about in the Call of Proposals. We have traditionally, based upon funding sources, put most of our county resources into providing personal health services and assuring compliance with county regulations. However, unlike many health departments, we have for a number of years put all of our Local Capacity Development Funds, furnished through Washington State Department of Health, into building local capacity in the areas of Assessment, Community Development, and Policy Development. The result is that we have a capable, Assessment and Community Development Section; a larger, technically-expert, Environmental Health Section; a knowledgeable, involved Island County Community Health Advisory Board eager to explore data, establish health priorities, and make policy recommendations to the Island County Board of Health; and collaborative, cooperative, communities ready for health initiatives. This grant proposes a demonstration project entitled “Island County Environmental Health Initiative”.

Understanding the Problem

Traditionally environmental health programs have relied upon the “regulatory” model for the purposes of delivering services to the community. Under this model, as health risks are identified through the collection of data and the identification of exposure pathways, state and local Boards of Health develop regulations that aim to reduce exposures of the general public to disease causing organisms or unacceptable risks. Once adopted, regulations serve to ensure that the public’s interest is protected.

The regulatory model, although based upon empirical data, does not provide a mechanism for empowering communities to partner with environmental health practitioners to determine public health priorities or mobilize community support for program direction. It also has a tendency to ignore local issues in favor of nationally set priorities. What results from this type of program implementation is a community that is not mobilized to support environmental health initiatives nor informed or educated on environmental health issues. The regulatory-based framework lacks the ability to explore, develop, and foster community relationships that could potentially aid in the effective implementation of comprehensive environmental health programs that rely upon community partnerships for support and success.

The provision of traditional environmental health services within the county is compounded by some of the unique physical attributes of both Whidbey and Camano Islands. As part of the Puget Sound lowlands, Island County was formed through a process of glaciation. Advances and retreats of glaciers have left deposits of glacial material that are characterized by deep deposits of outwash sands intermingled with layers of compacted sediments known as till. The permeable sands and gravels tend to accumulate water that serves as the drinking water source for the majority of the population. Camano Island and those areas of Whidbey Island outside of the City of Oak Harbor are solely reliant upon groundwater for a source of potable water. Approximately 72% of the county's population utilize groundwater as a source of potable water.

Because of this reliance, EPA, at the request of Island County, designated both Camano and Whidbey Islands a Sole Source Aquifer in 1982.

The nature of the glacially formed deposits that comprise Island County also significantly affect the efficacy of on-site sewage disposal systems. The City of Oak Harbor and three other small municipalities are the only areas of the county that are served by sanitary sewers. The remainder of the county depends upon on-site sewage systems for the disposal of effluent generated in homes and businesses. In many areas of the county where deep alluvial sand deposits are located, there is a short time of travel for water between an on-site sewage system and the underlying groundwater system. Other areas of the county not comprised of alluvial sands tend to be dominated by shallow surface soils underlain by glacial till. These shallow soils are limited in their capacity to effectively treat residential effluent.

Island County possesses 204 miles of shoreline including many public access beaches. These areas provide an opportunity for recreation including the collection of shellfish. There are also a number of commercial shellfish growing areas within Penn Cove and Holmes Harbor. The maintenance of on-site sewage disposal systems, and ultimately the protection of surface water quality, is necessary in order to maintain and protect shellfish resources.

Likewise, growth and development patterns in the county tax the existing infrastructure of the Environmental Health section of the department. According to the U.S. Census,

Island County ranks 14th in population and 4th in population density within Washington State. There has been a population increase of 19% from 1990 to the present, similar to Washington State (21%) which is also one of the top ten fastest growing states. Island County's Comprehensive Plan, adopted in 1998, shows an expected growth of 19-20% within the next ten years. Such growth has led to increased stress on the pristine environment of Whidbey and Camano Islands. In addition, Whidbey and Camano Island are tourist destinations whose infrastructures are impacted greatly by the increased number of visitors. Both residential growth and the tourist industries have had a large impact on areas of ground water, sewage, land use, and recreational areas.

The presence of a Department of Defense facility on north Whidbey Island, Naval Air Station Whidbey (NAS) also influences the provision of environmental health services within the community. The nature of temporarily assigned NAS personnel results in a somewhat transient population associated with the facility. Additionally, the presence of a major defense facility necessarily increases the risk of bioterrorism within the community.

In order to successfully expand environmental public health activities in Island County and develop partnerships with the community, it is necessary to re-evaluate the model by which the services are planned and implemented. Island County is proposing a project entitled "Island County Environmental Health Initiative" (ICEHI). We will use NACCHO's PACE-EH (Protocol for Assessing Community Excellence in Environmental Health) Guidebook for Local Health Officials to instigate local community involvement

in environmental health and advance the knowledge and technical skills of both health department staff and community members. Following the PACE-EH methodology we plan to be able to develop the departmental and community infrastructures that allow us to collect environmental health data and indicators, apply standards, analyze issues, set priorities and action plans, implement activities, and evaluate the process and activity outcomes.

Our proposed project aims to embrace both the philosophy and the methodology offered by the PACE-EH Model which incorporates the notion that environmental health is protected and improved most effectively when it is defined, understood, and acted upon locally. PACE-EH is “based on the premise that environmental health is the foundation of public health”, (Richard J. Jackson, MD, MPH, PACE-EH Guidebook). PACE-EH will be used as the model to operationalize the ten Essential Public Health Functions, ten Essential Environmental Health Services, and the Core Competencies for Effective Practice of Environmental Health. Environmental Health staff and members of the project steering committee and advisory board will receive training in the Essential Public Health and Environmental Health Services during the onset of the project. As the PACE-EH assessment progresses, particular attention will be placed upon the relationship between the essential services and particular tasks within the PACE-EH model, as depicted in the table on page 13, to ensure future incorporation of the services into environmental health practice.

A goal of our project is to engage our staff and communities in the three core processes: (1) develop new relationships with community stakeholders, (2) expand community understanding about the relationship between human health and the state of the environment, and (3) redefine the leadership roles for public health officials and staff in environmental health. Other goals meet a number of the issues addressed in the Call for Proposals and the ten Essential Public Health Services and the ten Essential Environmental Health Services. These goals include engagement in activities that allow project staff and boards to link, in a systemic manner, environmental and public health issues. They will be able to focus on the relationship between health and the environment across the entire county. The activities will include environmental health assessment, surveillance, monitoring, and policy/program recommendations.

Most of the resources necessary to begin this process already exist within the Island County Health Department and within the community. The department's Environmental Health section, Assessment and Community Development section, and the Community Health Advisory Board are eagerly awaiting the opportunity to explore data, establish health priorities, and make policy recommendations to the Island County Board of Health. The funding opportunity offered by this grant would provide the financial support needed to begin the process of re-assessing environmental health program development and delivery within Island County to ensure consistency with the ten Essential Public Health Services, the ten Essential Environmental Health Services, and the Core Competencies for Effective Practice of Environmental Health.

Description of Island County

Island County is comprised of five islands: Whidbey, Camano, Ben Ure, Smith, and Baby Islands. Island County lies approximately 27-30 miles north of Seattle and about 50 miles south of the Canadian border. Located in Puget Sound, Whidbey Island stretches 45 miles in length and has 148 miles of shoreline, making it the longest island in the continental United States. Camano Island also stretches into Puget Sound and is connected to the mainland by a 2-lane bridge. Island County has a total population of 71,558 (2000). Summer residents (May-September) make up another 10-20%.

Whidbey Island is made up of three distinct areas: north, central, and south. North Whidbey is the most populous with 40,100 people in the greater Oak Harbor area. It is home to Naval Air Station (NAS) Whidbey Island, which employs over 7,700 military personnel. In late 1993, the Naval Air Station Whidbey Island (NAS) began transitioning to a P-3/EA6-B base status, housing squadrons from California and Hawaii. This brought approximately 4,000 new families into the Oak Harbor community and surrounding areas. NAS Whidbey has “put us on the map” recently with the attention given the “Whidbey-24” who were held, and subsequently released, following the landing of their airplane in China. The Deception Pass Bridge connects this region to adjoining Skagit County.

Central Whidbey has a population of 10,600 and includes the town of Coupeville, the county seat, and the small-unincorporated town of Greenbank. Coupeville, founded by 19th century sea captains, is a historic farming community. Most medical services,

including a small general hospital, are located in town (the Navy has its own hospital in Oak Harbor). Island County Health Department is located in Coupeville.

South Whidbey is the third geographic area on Whidbey Island. Made up of the small towns of Freeland and Clinton, and the city of Langley, it has a total population of 14,000. A significant number of South Whidbey residents commute by ferry to jobs at the Boeing Company in Everett or to other businesses on the mainland.

Due to its unique geographic structure, Camano Island continues to remain fairly rural in flavor. It is 16 miles long and has 52 miles of shoreline. Camano has a population of 12,800 residents. Camano residents must travel at least 15 miles to the nearest hospital and most educational and medical facilities are located in the nearest town of Stanwood. A CDBG-funded community health service facility recently opened on Camano Island in the spring of 1999.

Island County is proud of the many community members we have who are concerned about the environment, sustainability, and maintaining and preserving the beauty of our Northwest home. Despite its small area, Island County is home to a number of state and local parks and land designated to remain fairly “untainted” to growth and development. They include Ebey’s National Historic Reserve, Greenbank Farm, South Whidbey, Camano, and Deception Pass State Parks and Smith Prairie. Deception Pass State Park is the most frequented State Park in all of Washington State and rivals Yosemite National Park in the number of visitors that it attracts each year.

There are a number of community-based organizations with missions focused on environmental preservation, sustainability, and/or environmental justice within the community. Some of these include Whidbey Environmental Action Network, Institute for Children's Environmental Health, the AuSable Institute, Goosefoot, and the Whidbey Institute. Many of these groups will be asked to sit on the Project's Advisory Board. A list of potential members and the roles and responsibilities for the Project's Core Steering Committee as well as the Advisory Board are noted in Appendix 1.

Objectives and Project Methodology

Objectives

Objective 1: To implement a community-based PACE-EH Project in Island County.

Consistent with Essential Environmental Health Services #6 – Evaluate effectiveness, accessibility, and quality of personal and population-based environmental health services; and #8 – Mobilize community partnerships to identify and solve environmental health problems.

Objective 2: To measure a wide-range of environmental health indicators (both outcome and contextual) and risk behaviors specific to our communities.

Consistent with Essential Environmental Health Service #2 – Diagnose and investigate environmental health problems and health hazards in the community.

Objective 3: To increase the data storage and retrieval capacity within existing Environmental Health Programs.

Consistent with Essential Environmental Health Services #1 – Monitor health status to identify community environmental health problems; and #2 - Diagnose and investigate environmental health problems and health hazards in the community.

Objective 4: To make policy recommendations based on data, health indicators and standards, sophisticated data analyses, and examination of “best practices” of priority issues and areas of concern.

Consistent with Essential Environmental Health Service #7 – Develop policies and plans that support individual and community environmental health efforts.

Objective 5: To develop new relationships and dialogue between Environmental Health staff and the public they serve.

Consistent with Essential Environmental Health Services #8 - Mobilize community partnerships to identify and solve environmental health problems; and #9 – Inform, educate, and empower people about environmental health issues.

Objective 6: To educate and advance the knowledge and technical skills of Environmental Health staff and community members.

Consistent with Essential Environmental Health Services #5 – Assure a competent environmental health workforce; and #9 - Inform, educate, and empower people about environmental health issues.

Project Methodology

Primary project methodologies include the implementation of an Island County PACE-EH process with oversight/technical assistance being provided by the Island County Health Department, the CHAB PACE-EH Steering Committee, and a Project Advisory Board. Specific methods will include the collection and analysis of environmental and public health data from numerous sources, including Federal and State agency information, as well as that collected by Island County. We also plan to tap internal resources to engage in an environmental health mapping exercise using Geographic Information System (GIS) software to track data, map resources, and develop a community health indicator set. And finally, the Steering Committee and Project Advisory Board will plan advocacy and coalition-building activities to gather input from the community through forums and focus groups. Throughout the project we also expect to create formal and informal education opportunities for Health Department staff, as well as community members, to expand the knowledge and competencies related to the root causes of health, the impact of the environment, and promising health improvement strategies. Specifically, one such opportunity will be training provided by the University of Washington on the Ten Essential Environmental Health Services. Finally, we intend to

build significant capacity within the Island County Health Department and our community to carry out the Ten Essential Environmental Health Services.

Project Development Plan

We propose a demonstration project that will implement a community-based environmental health assessment and action project in Island County. The project will examine both traditional (water, sewage, food safety) as well as emerging (toxic exposure risks, bioterrorism, emerging infections) environmental health issues. The PACE-EH methodology systematically applies the “Ten Essential Environmental Health Services” through the completion of thirteen tasks, which include:

1. Determine community capacity
2. Define and characterize the community
3. Assemble a community-based environmental health assessment project Advisory Board
4. Define the goals, objectives, and scope of the assessment
5. Generate a list of community-specific environmental health issues
6. Analyze the issues with a system framework
7. Develop locally appropriate indicators
8. Select standards against which the local status can be compared
9. Create issue profiles
10. Rank the issues
11. Set priorities for action
12. Develop an action plan
13. Evaluation progress and plan for the future

Activities associated with these tasks, and their relationship to the Ten Essential

Environmental Health Services are displayed in the following table:

<u>Essential Environmental Health Services</u>	<u>PACE-EH Task #</u>	<u>Activities Associated with PACE-EH Tasks</u>
1. Monitor health status to identify community environmental health problems	4-9	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Assessing the environmental health needs of the community Assessing the environmental health determinants in the community
2. Diagnose and investigate environmental health problems and health hazards in the community	5-9	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Investigating the occurrence of environmentally related events
3. Enforce laws and regulations that protect health and ensure safety	11-13	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Protecting residents from exposure to contaminants and hazardous surroundings
4. Link people to needed environmental health services and assure the provision of environmental health services when otherwise unavailable	12	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Implementing an environmental health program Managing resources and developing sound organizational structures
5. Assure a competent environmental health workforce	1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Assess skills and capacities of environmental health workforce Provide appropriate training to build capacities in coalition building, data collection and analysis, etc.
6. Evaluate effectiveness, accessibility, and quality of personal and population-based environmental health services	13	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Evaluating programs and developing quality assurance mechanisms
7. Develop policies and plans that support individual and community environmental health efforts	10-11	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Setting priorities for environmental health action Developing plans and strategies to address environmental health priorities
8. Mobilize community partnerships to identify and solve environmental health problems	1-3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Advocating for environmental health improvement, building constituencies, and identifying community resources
9. Inform, educate, and empower people about environmental health issues	1-13	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Inform and educate the public about environmental health issues
10. Research for new insights and innovative solutions to environmental health problems and issues	12-13	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Select intervention and prevention activities for identified environmental health issues Conduct process and outcomes evaluations of selected activities

As noted within the table, there is a strong relationship between the Essential Environmental Health Services and the activities or tasks in the PACE-EH model. As the project progresses the outcomes of the PACE-EH process will result in the provision of future environmental health services in our community commensurate with the essential health services and community need.

An initial task of the project will be to determine the resources, skills and capacities needed for the assessment. A skills inventory will be conducted with the environmental health workforce, specifically addressing the Core Competencies for Effective Practice of Environmental Health. Training programs and activities will be coordinated to reflect the deficits in those areas. Since the community-based approach of PACE-EH is a new model for the existing workforce, it is anticipated that staff training will focus primarily on the areas of community mobilization, coalition building, communication and public outreach. Further training opportunities will be explored during later phases of the assessment, i.e. technical training to fill the voids in technical expertise in dealing with new and emerging environmental health issues.

In anticipation of funding opportunities such as this one, our Island County Community Health Advisory Board (CHAB) has recently established a high level Environmental Health Steering Committee to start developing the programs/projects we wish to embark on in Island County. The CHAB is comprised of diverse community members appointed by the Island County Board of Health to advise the Board on health issues and priorities, make policy recommendations, and maintain an overview of health in Island County.

The CHAB Environmental Health Steering Committee has been designated to develop a community-based environmental health project and seek funding for staffing and project implementation.

The CHAB Environmental Health Steering Committee is chaired by Marie Piper, Environmental Consulting Engineer; and has as its members with their current or previous professional experience noted:

- Mike Benway, MSN, MBA: Educator-Skagit Community College, former Commanding Officer, Naval Hospital, Oak Harbor;
- Marshall Bronson: Retired Naval Intelligence Analyst, current small business owner, Coupeville City Councilman, Trustee and Treasurer for Ebey's National Historic Reserve;
- Roger Case, MD: Island County Health Officer and Whidbey General Hospital Commissioner, retired Board Certified family practice physician, and Naval Officer;
- Herb McDonald, MD: Retired physician, Board Certified Internist and Cardiologist;
- Celine Servatius, BS in Marine Biology: Occupational and Environmental Health Officer, Naval Air Station Whidbey;
- Joline DeVos, MA/ABD in Educational Leadership, Captain USN, Director of Nursing, Educator, Naval Air Station Whidbey;
- Eileen Rosman: VISTA volunteer with a wide range of non-profit experience and community volunteerism; and
- Meredith Schulte, Oak Harbor High School Junior and student member of CHAB.

The Project timeline is included as Appendix 2. It outlines major milestones in project implementation and the timelines predicted by those involved. Based on the PACE-EH model, our timeline includes the thirteen tasks espoused by that model. Our timeline and expected activities include some in addition to the PACE-EH model, specifically those moving our communities toward initiating activities to address priority environmental health issues. All initiated activities will be based on "Evidence-Based Practices" and "Models That Work" (U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Public Health

Service, Health Resources and Services Administration, *Models That Work*, 1995 and 1996.) and all will have evaluative components built into them prior to commencement.

Funding has been requested primarily for staffing the project and data collection. We currently are able to engage in environmental health data collection necessary to ensure compliance with state and local regulations. In this project we are requesting funding that would allow us to proactively design an environmental health data system applicable in a local county jurisdiction and collect and analyze the data in areas we determine a scarcity of necessary data. Funding is also requested for equipment needs and training needs necessary for infrastructure support and to build the base of knowledgeable staff and community members willing and able to take on the work. A result of the planned work will also be a targeted list of environmental health priority areas, based on environmental health indicators, risk assessments, and potential interventions. We are requesting funds that would enable us to develop communication materials and disseminate this information widely throughout our communities.

Coordination and Collaboration

We currently have strong collaborations in place both interdepartmentally (Environmental Health Services, Assessment/Community Development, and Personal Health Services) and with a number of other governmental and academic organizations. Our substantial extra-departmental links include: public works and planning departments of Island County and county municipalities, Whidbey Naval Station Hospital and Occupational and Environmental Department, Whidbey General Hospital, and Affiliated

Hospital Districts. We also have good working relationship with Washington State agencies including the Department of Health, Department of Ecology, Department of Natural Resources and Department of Social and Health Services. We work closely with the University of Washington School of Public Health and Community Medicine including Chuck Treser and Carl Osaki at the Department of Environmental Health and Jack Thompson at the Northwest Center for Public Health Practice. This proposal has specific written support from Cascade Environmental Management, the Island County Community Health Advisory Board, Island County Beach Watchers, the Island County Marine Resources Committee, the Kiwanas Club of Coupeville, the Opportunity Council, Washington State University Cooperative Extension Agency, Whidbey Island Audubon Society, Whidbey General Hospital District, South Whidbey Pediatrics, and Whidbey Naval Hospital.

Environmental Health staff currently provide staff support to another local advisory board, the Water Resource Advisory Committee. This board serves to advise the Board of Island County Commissioners on matters related to water resource management, protection, and public health preservation for both surface and groundwater issues. The working relationship that currently exists with this board would compliment many of the tasks identified in the proposed workplan with respect to data collection and analysis, and building community competence and knowledge concerning water issues and public health protection.

While all the aforementioned groups work closely with each other to provide both public and private health services to Island County residents, obtaining a grant would give these groups the incentive to explore Core Public Health Issues in Environmental Health and to develop local capacity to review and understand local environmental health issues in a pro-active, science based process.

Project Management and Staffing

Applicant Agency

Island County is a municipal government in the State of Washington. The Island County Health Department is a department of Island County. The fiduciary board for the Island County Health Department is the Island County Board of Commissioners. All three Board of Commissioner positions are elected. The policy setting board for the Island County Health Department is the Island County Board of Health. The Board of Health is made up of the three County Commissioners and one elected Whidbey General Hospital District Commissioner and the elected Mayor of Oak Harbor.

The Island County Health Department currently employs 41.32 full time equivalents with a year 2001 budget of \$3,806,063. The current department director has held that position since 1987. The “Island County Health Department abbreviated Organizational Chart” and a copy of the brochure “Island County Health Department” can be found in Appendix 3 and 4, respectively.

Project Staffing

The project will be managed by Tim McDonald, MPH, Director of Health Services, Island County Health Department. Mr. McDonald was Chair of NACCHO's Steering Committee for the PACE-EH program. Keith Higman, Island County Environmental Health Director would directly supervise the program.

This grant would allow the Island County Health Department to hire one FTE staff person to coordinate the Initiative and one FTE to provide administrative support. In addition, a number of current Island County Health Department staff will work in coordination with the Initiative staff. Their names, section affiliations, and expertise are noted as follows:

- Carrie McLachlan, MPA, Supervisor, Assessment & Community Development, expertise in health policy development, health services research (including outcomes research), and large grant-funded research projects;
- Mary Anderson, MPH, Assessment and Community Development, expertise in clinical research and outcomes research; and
- Carol McNeil, RN, Deputy Director and Director, Personal Health Services, provision of personal health services, contract administration, and public health leadership.

Expenditures and revenues for the project will be accounted for using the Washington State BARS accounting and reporting system. The Washington State Auditors Office performs annual audits. The Island County Health Department follows OMB circular number A-87 (Cost Principles for State and Local Government). Kathy Carpenter, Island County Health Department Accounting Supervisor, will oversee compliance.

Project Evaluation

Both process and outcomes evaluation will be used to evaluate the Island County Environmental Health Initiative. The process outcomes will track collaborations that occur and the successful completion of tasks designated in the project's timeline. Changes in community knowledge, perceptions, attitudes/beliefs, and behaviors will be measured via community focus groups and forums, to be conducted at the start and end of the project. The information generated from the focus groups will allow us to conduct an "impact assessment" in Island County. The impact assessment will give the Island County Health Department, and project funders, the ability to measure how the project is working. Qualitative interim analyses will also be conducted at the end of years one and two.

In order to assure that environmental programs and staff are developed and trained in support of the Ten Essential Environmental Health Services, an evaluation tool will be developed to measure the understanding and familiarity with the essential services both pre- and post project. The evaluation will be used to assess the effectiveness of the project on the provision of future public health services commensurate with the essential services.

A key product of the Island County Environmental Health Initiative will be the development of community environmental health indicators. Outcomes evaluation will include measurement of the impact of the project on those indicators, which will include reduction in environmental risk factors and/or behaviors. A detailed analysis plan will be

developed as part of an overall action plan, based on the prioritization of health issues.

As noted in PACE-EH, use of the proposed methodology should result in:

- A thorough and well-documented decision-making and planning process;
- Effective participation of a well-represented public throughout the process;
- An enhanced understanding of the community's environmental health needs;
- Strengthened community support for the identification and prevention of environmental risks;
- An enhanced appreciation for the critical connections between health and the environment;
- An appropriate and equitable distribution of environmental health programs and services; directed to priority environmental health issues;
- A plan for action and evaluation measures that capitalizes on the strengths of the community and Island County Health Department to improve the community's health; and
- The instigation of activities designated to help minimize or prevent environmental health issues and risks.

Reports to funding agencies will contain evaluation elements that show measures of the project's progress and outcomes, as well as "lessons learned" that can be applied to future generations of programs and research.

Additionally, we anticipate that the proposed project will develop substantial capacity within the Island County Health Department and Island County communities to understand and resolve environmental issues using science-based methodologies. Such increased local capacity will provide state and federal policy makers the opportunity to review policies developed locally and develop state or national policy initiatives where appropriate.

Conclusion

As noted throughout the proposal, Island County is eager and prepared to begin a community-based, cross system, initiative to examine, plan, and implement environmental health activities. A national model has been embraced and expanded upon to include the initiation of environmental health activities in areas consider to be high priority. We believe the comprehensive community project we are proposing could serve as a model for other local health departments. It is our belief that we have the community, political, and administrative will in place to begin an exciting, data-driven environmental health initiative as described in the grant proposal. If successfully implemented, we believe the proposed project will result in enhanced departmental and community capacities to systematically collect and analyze environmental health data, develop interventions and programs in areas of highest need, and develop the community-based networks necessary to reduce, and proactively address, environmental health risks in Island County.